

REMARKS

ELECTION AMONG SPECIES

Applicant affirms the election to prosecute the species of group 1A, claims 1-22. Claims 23-84 have been cancelled.

OBJECTION TO DRAWINGS

Applicant submits new drawing sheets 1-3 for replacing the original like-number sheets. The new drawings, which were prepared by a competent draftsman, are believed to overcome the informality objections.

NOVELTY OBJECTIONS

Claims 1-6, 10, 11, 14, 15, 19, and 20 stand rejected as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,808,801 to Nakayama et al.

Claim 1-6, 14, and 15 have been cancelled. Claims 10 and 11 now depend from rewritten claim 9. Claims 19 and 20 now depend from rewritten claim 18.

OBVIOUSNESS OBJECTIONS

Claims 12, 13, 21 and 22 stand rejected as obvious over US Patent No. 5,808,801 to Nakayama et al.

Claims 12 and 13 now depend indirectly from rewritten claim 9. Claims 21 and 22 now depend indirectly from rewritten claim 18.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Claims 7-9 and 16-18 are objected to as depending from a rejected base claim but would otherwise be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their base and intervening claims.

Claim 7 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1 and intervening claim 6.

Claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1 and intervening claim 6.

Claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 1. Claims 10-13 depend directly or indirectly from rewritten claim 9.

Claim 16 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 14 and intervening claim 15. Claim 17 depends directly from rewritten claim 16.

Claim 18 has been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of base claim 14. Claims 19-22 depend directly or indirectly from rewritten claim 18.

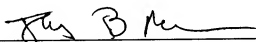
CLAIM FEES

The total number of claims has been reduced from 84 to 14. The total number of independent claims have been reduced from 9 to 5. Accordingly, no excess claim fees are believed due in connection with this amendment.

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All of the remaining claims 7-13 and 16-22 are deemed to contain patentable subject matter. Reconsideration and allowance of these claims are respectfully requested. For any questions regarding this amendment or the application, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's representative by telephone at the number given below.

Respectfully submitted,



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